

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PDIP, CI

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS CEREMONY

1. THE PRIVATE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND
CHILEAN AMBASSADOR JOSE MIGUEL BARROS FOCUSED ON FOUR
AREAS, ALL RAISED BY THE PRESIDENT: HUMAN RIGHTS,
LETELIER, BOLIVIAN OUTLET TO THE SEA AND BEAGLE CHANNEL.

2. HUMAN RIGHTS: THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO
HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT PINOCHET DURING
PINOCHET'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON LAST SEPTEMBER FOR THE
PANAMA CANAL TREATIES' SIGNING CEREMONY AND TO EXCHANGE
VIEWS WITH HIM FRANKLY ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST,
PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HE WAS ALSO
PLEASED TO LEARN OF THE PROGRESS THAT HAD BEEN MADE IN
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CHILE SINCE THAT TIME, NOT BECAUSE OF THE U.S., BUT
BECAUSE OF THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT'S OWN DECISIONS. HE
HOPED THAT THIS PROGRESS WOULD CONTINUE.

3. AMBASSADOR BARROS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE
PRESIDENT'S REMARKS. HE EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT HIS
COUNTRY HAD COME VERY CLOSE TO A CIVIL WAR AND THAT IT

HAD BEEN IMPORTANT TO TAKE STRONG MEASURES TO AVOID

THIS. HOWEVER, THE SITUATION SEEMED TO BE WELL UNDER CONTROL NOW AND THE GOVERNMENT WAS DETERMINED TO PROCEED WITH LIBERALIZATION, FULL RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND RETURN TO NORMALCY. HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED BECAUSE THIS FIT IN WITH HIS OWN BELIEFS ON THE PATH THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE.

4. LETELIER: THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE SUPPORT WHICH THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN GIVING TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION OF LETELIER.

5. AMBASSADOR BARROS SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO LEARN FROM THE PRESS THAT PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE IN IDENTIFYING THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS CRIME. HE HAD DENOUNCED IT AT THE TIME IT OCCURRED AND EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT THE PERPETRATORS WOULD BE FOUND AND PUNISHED. HE HAD READ RECENTLY THAT THERE WAS SOME POSSIBILITY OF INVOLVEMENT OF THE CHILEAN SECRET POLICE. EVEN IF THAT PROVED TO BE THE CASE HE STILL HOPED THAT JUSTICE WOULD BE DONE.

6. BOLIVIAN OUTLET: THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED HIS INTEREST IN A SOLUTION TO CHILE'S PROBLEMS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS, PARTICULARLY AS THEY RELATE TO BOLIVIA'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DESIRE FOR AN OUTLET TO THE SEA. HE SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS WITH PRESIDENT PINOCHET AND WITH THE PRESIDENTS OF BOLIVIA AND PERU. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE PRESIDENTS HAD MET BUT HE DID NOT KNOW OF ANY SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS THAT CAME FROM THE MEETING.

7. AMBASSADOR BARROS SAID THAT CHILE IS VERY ANXIOUS TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THIS ISSUE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT BOLIVIAN TERRITORY HAD BEEN TRANSFERRED TO CHILE AS A RESULT OF A TREATY AND HE ADDED THAT CHILE COULD NOT DISPOSE OF CERTAIN TERRITORIES WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH PERU. THEREFORE, ANY SOLUTION OF THE BOLIVIAN OUTLET QUESTION WOULD DEPEND ON REACHING AGREEMENT WITH PERU. HE SAID THAT WITHOUT GIVING MUCH DETAIL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BUSHNELL HAD SPOKEN TO HIM OF THE POSSIBILITY OF A JOINT PROJECT IN THE AREA WHICH WOULD BE IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL THE COUNTRIES. THIS SOUNDED APPEALING AND WAS SOMETHING HE WOULD WISH TO EXPLORE FURTHER. IN ANY CASE AGREEMENT WILL HAVE TO BE REACHED AMONG THE THREE COUNTRIES ON A FINAL SETTLEMENT.

8. BEAGLE CHANNEL: THE PRESIDENT REFERRED TO THE

CHILEAN DISPUTE WITH ARGENTINA OVER THE BEAGLE CHANNEL
AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION WOULD
BE FOUND TO THAT ALSO.

9. AMBASSADOR BARROS SAID THAT CHILE HAD SUBMITTED
THE WHOLE QUESTION TO ARBITRATION BY A PANEL OF JUDGES
AGREED TO BY ARGENTINA. THE PANEL HAD RULED IN FAVOR
OF CHILE BUT ARGENTINA HAD NOW REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE
RULING. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT
FOR CHILE TO EXPLAIN TO ITS PEOPLE HOW IT COULD CEDE
ON A MATTER WHERE JUSTICE WAS SO CLEARLY ON ITS SIDE.
IN ANY EVENT CHILE IS NOW HAVING DISCUSSIONS WITH
ARGENTINA ATTEMPTING TO WORK OUT MARITIME BOUNDARIES.
IF A REASONABLE SETTLEMENT CANNOT BE REACHED, CHILE
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MIGHT THEN WISH TO REFER THE CASE TO THE INTERNATIONAL
COURT OF JUSTICE.

10. AMBASSADOR BARROS REMARKED TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY
TODMAN LATER THAT HE WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THE CORDIAL
TONE OF THE MEETING AND THE GRACIOUSNESS, CONCERN AND
UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESIDENT. VANCE

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